

August 10, 2013 6:53PM

Fair fun in Belmont

County 4-H fair was big on Jell-O, but a bubble gum blow-out

BELMONT - The cows were pulling, the goats were vocal and the horses were groomed and gallant as the Belknap County 4-H Fair kicked off Saturday.

Although opening-day attendance was up from last year - largely because last year's fair was all but rained out - fair president Fran Wendelboe said the overall numbers were down early Saturday. However, she said numbers were getting better during the day and fair officials were hoping for a good day today.



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Kelby Brooker of Ashland, left, Georgina McFarland of Bridgewater, and Louisa McFarland of Bridgewater struggle through the bubble gum-blowing contest. (DAN SEUFERT/Union Leader Correspondent)



"It's getting better as we go today, and we hope there will be lots of people here on Sunday," she said.

Billed as the biggest little agricultural fair in the Granite State, the fair features lots of 4-H kids who brought their animals - cows, horses, dogs and more - to compete against other 4-H members and their animals.

There was also plenty of fun for kids who weren't 4-H members, including a Jell-O-eating contest, a pie-eating contest and a bubble gum-blowing contest.

Young Haley Marshall isn't a fan of Jell-O, yet she won one of the contests Saturday.

"I don't like Jell-O, but I did it anyway," she said.

Another Jell-O contest winner, Ammon Rose of Franklin, was so eager to win that he knocked his paper bowl off the table during the competition.

"It was messy," he said. "The fun is getting messy and eating Jell-O."

The bubble gum-blowing contest did not go as well, however. For some reason, the 10 children competing couldn't blow bubbles larger than an inch or two, even after spending several minutes chewing the gum and trying to produce large bubbles.

Most bubbles grew to about two inches and popped.

"The gum was too hard," said Kelby Brooker of Ashland, one of the winners. "I did OK, but for some reason the gum was really hard."

The fair continues Sunday starting at 9 a.m., with events like oxen-pulling, sheep-sheering, and horse and pony competitions running all day. Admission is \$7; free for children under 10. For more details, go to bc4Hfair.org.

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